



Hon. Doris O. Matsui

Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui

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Thursday, May 11, 2006

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Matsui Urges Appropriators to Save the National Children's Study Leads Bipartisan Coalition of Over 75 Members

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) is leading efforts in the House to save the National Children's Study (NCS) from being eliminated later this year. In a letter to House Appropriators, Congresswoman Matsui, joined by a bipartisan coalition of 78 Members of Congress, urged funding for NCS be restored and that the program remain on Congress's list of priorities. The NCS is the largest and most ambitious children's health study ever conducted. The letter sent to the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor – Health and Human Services – Education Chairman Ralph Regula and Ranking Member David Obey was in response to President Bush's budget recommendation earlier this year to eliminate funding for this vital long-term project.

Authorized by Congress in 2000, the NCS will provide answers to the causes of many preventable childhood illnesses such as premature birth, asthma, obesity, preventable injury, autism, development delay, mental illness, and learning disorders. The research will be conducted in Sacramento and 104 other sites across the country, working with more than 100,000 children from across the country from birth until age 21. Like the Framingham heart study and the Human Genome Project, researchers expect the benefits of NCS to be used for years to come. Locally, NCA will provide a great deal of data for autism researchers at the U.C. Davis M.I.N.D. Institute.

Below is the text of the letter:

May 10, 2006

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS,
Education and Related Agencies
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

As you begin consideration of the FY 2007 Appropriations bills, we are writing to respectfully request that you include funding for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development sufficient so that the National Children's Study (NCS) may remain strong among Congress' list of priorities for fiscal year 2007. Authorized by Congress in 2000, the National Children's Study is the largest long-term study of children with regard to the major causes of childhood illnesses such as premature birth, asthma, obesity, preventable injury, autism, development delay, mental illness, and learning disorders.

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As you know, key indicators in children's health and development are alarming. Between 1980 and 1995, the percentage of children with asthma doubled. On average, 3-8% of children born each year will be affected by a neurodevelopmental disorder such as autism. And the proportion of overweight children ages 6-18 has more than doubled in the past two decades. These children's health issues require a long-term, comprehensive study of the environmental factors that contribute to the degrading quality of children's health. This landmark study meets that need – the study would enroll a representative sample of 100,000 children from over 100 counties across the U.S., including eleven counties in California, Ohio and Wisconsin – and promises to provide the data necessary to advance children's health in significant ways.

Having already invested tens of millions of dollars in worthwhile planning, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) would require \$69 million in fiscal year 2007 in order to begin enrollment in this landmark study, as well as future funding in order to carry the study to its completion. The study is not only of critical importance but also of significant value to taxpayers. The study has the potential to pay for itself twofold within one year, even if rates of childhood injuries, autism, asthma, schizophrenia and obesity are reduced by just one percent.

We are mindful of the many competing budget priorities, however, we urge you to ensure that funding for the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development continues to reflect Congress' intent that the National Children's Study remains a priority in fiscal year 2007. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Doris O. Matsui
John D. Dingell
John Conyers, Jr.
Charles B. Rangel
Pete Stark
Henry A. Waxman
Barney Frank
Howard L. Berman
Major R. Owens
Bart Gordon
John Lewis
Frank Pallone
Neil Abercrombie
Sherrod Brown
Bob Filner
Eddie Bernice Johnson
Marty Meehan
Albert Wynn
Mike Doyle
Sheila Jackson-Lee
Juanita Millender-McDonald
Bob Etheridge
Carolyn McCarthy
Mike McIntyre
Ellen O. Tauscher
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Joseph Crowley

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Jim Gerlach
George Miller
Dale E. Kildee.
Tom Lantos
Sander M. Levin
Gary L. Ackerman
Benjamin L. Cardin
Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Jim McDermott
Collin Peterson
Anna Eshoo
Alcee L. Hastings
Carolyn Maloney
Lynn Woolsey
Lloyd Doggett
Chaka Fattah
Zoe Lofgren
Diana Degette
Dennis Kucinich
James P. McGovern
Loretta Sanchez
John F. Tierney
Barbara Lee
Tammy Baldwin
Rush Holt

(Continued...)

Dennis Moore
Janice D. Schakowsky
Susan A. Davis
Jim Matheson
Adam Schiff
Diane Watson
Rahm Emanuel
Brad Miller
Chris Van Hollen
Emanuel Cleaver
Charlie Melancon
Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Grace F. Napolitano
Mike Thompson
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